

NOTICE OF
PUBLIC HEARING
May 15, 2003

for the
Beneficial Use Amendment
to the
WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN (Basin Plan)
FOR THE NORTH COAST REGION

NOTICE IS HEARBY GIVEN that the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (Regional Water Board) is proposing to update the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan). Regional Water Board staff will hold thr e public workshops on the dates and at times set forth below for the Beneficial Use Amendment to the Basin Plan.

PROJECT TITLE

Proposed Beneficial Use Amendment to the Basin Plan

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

State and federal laws require that the Basin Plan be reviewed periodically to accommodate changes in technologies, policies, and physical characteristics of the planning areas. During the last Triennial Review conducted in 2001, Regional Water Board staff identified a list of priority issues to be addressed with Basin Plan amendments over the next three years. The Regional Water Board adopted the Triennial Review Priority List on August 23, 2001 by Resolution No. 2001-93. The Beneficial Use Basin Plan Amendment, updating Chapter 2 of the Basin Plan, was listed as the number one priority of thirty-three items.

The Basin Plan describes beneficial uses for waters throughout the North Coast Region, and establishes objectives and programs to protect those beneficial uses. As required by the Clean Water Act (CWA §101 and §303), beneficial uses must be designated for all waters of the State. The North Coast Region encompasses watersheds from the Oregon state border to the Estero de San Antonio which drain to the Pacific Ocean, and includes Del Norte, Trinity, Humboldt, and Mendocino counties and portions of Siskiyou, Sonoma, Glenn, Modoc, Lake and Marin counties.

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (Regional Water Board) is proposing to amend the Beneficial Use Section (Chapter 2) of the Basin Plan, including updating beneficial use designations established in the Basin Plan. Staff to the Board is asking for public input on this issue.

Action on the proposed amendment will be taken in accordance with a regulatory program exemption under Section 21080.5 of the Public Resources Code from the requirement to prepare an environmental impact report under the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code Section 2100 et seq.) and with other applicable laws and regulations.

STAFF CONTACT

Lauren Clyde
NCRWQCB Planning Unit
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A
Santa Rosa, California 95403
(707) 576-2674 (phone)
(707) 523-0135 (fax)
Email: clydl@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov

PUBLIC HEARING

The Regional Water Board will conduct a public adoption hearing to consider approval of the Beneficial Use Amendment to the Basin Plan. The public hearing will be conducted in accordance with 23 Cal. Code of Regulations §649.3. Time limits may be imposed on oral testimony at the public hearing; groups are encouraged to designate a spokesperson. All exhibits presented at the hearing, including charts, graphs, and other testimony must be left with Regional Water Board as they will become part of the administrative record.

At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Regional Water Board will consider adoption of the proposed amendment, or changes to the proposed amendment consistent with the general purpose of the proposed Basin Plan amendment that are a result of the logical outgrowth of the testimony received.

The public hearing will be held during the regularly scheduled board meeting, which begins at 9:00 a.m., as follows:

May 15, 2003

Regional Water Quality Control Board
Hearing Room
5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A
Santa Rosa, California 95403

The purpose of the hearing is to take public comments on the proposed Beneficial Use Basin Plan Amendment and to consider adoption of the Amendment. Consistent with or complimentary to the general purpose of the proposed Amendment, changes or alternatives to the proposed document (Amendment) may occur as a logical outgrowth of the testimony, staff presentation, and/or discussions during the hearing. The Regional Water Board may extend the public hearing beyond May 15, 2003, if necessary.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF DRAFT AMENDMENT, COMMENT PERIOD AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

Beginning on March 5, 2003, the draft Basin Plan amendment, the environmental checklist, and the staff report that serves as the environmental document functionally equivalent to CEQA requirements are posted and available to be downloaded from the Regional Water Board Web site: <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/~rwqcb1/>. Copies are also available at the Regional Water Board office. Further information and copies may also be obtained by contacting the lead staff person listed above.

Public comments, oral and written, will be considered up to and during the public hearing. The public hearings will be held at regularly scheduled Regional Water Board meeting on May 15, 2003 in Santa Rosa. In order to receive a written response from staff, written comments should be submitted by mail or fax to the staff contact listed above by 5:00 p.m. on April 30, 2003.

A response to comments, describing the comments from the public and responses of Regional Water Board staff will be available upon request on or after May 7, 2003. Documents may be reviewed or copied at 5550 Skylane Blvd., Suite A, Santa Rosa, California, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Mondays, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, and from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Fridays. Persons wishing to review said documents should telephone the Regional Water Board office at (707) 576-2220 to schedule an appointment. Persons may request a copy of public reports associated with this item by telephoning the same number. A copy of this Notice, the proposed Amendment, Staff Report, and the current Basin Plan can be accessed through the North Coast Regional Water Board website at: www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/. A summary of the comments received by the deadline and responses to comments will also be available at this website on May 7, 2003.

DIRECTIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY

Directions for the hearing location can be found above or on the Regional Water Board website. Anyone requiring reasonable accommodation to participate in any of the workshops should contact Jean Lockett, Executive Assistant, at (707) 576-2307, at least five days prior to the scheduled workshop. The hearing location is accessible to persons with disabilities. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-800-735-2929 or voice line at 1-800-735-2922.

Susan A. Warner
Executive Officer

March 24, 2003

(lrc/bu hearing notice.doc)